




Midpeninsula Regional
Open Space District

Memorandum

DATE: March 15, 2016

MEMO TO: Legislative, Funding, Public Affairs Committee

THROUGH: Stephen E. Abbors, General Manager 

FROM: Shelly Lewis, Public Affairs Manager

SUBJECT: Public request to fund non-designated benches

The Public Affairs Department receives several constituent memorial bench requests each year. The Public Affairs Manager reviews these requests based on criteria from Policy 5.01 for Site Naming, Gift and Special Recognition. Those that meet the criteria are forwarded to the Legislative, Funding, and Public Affairs Committee (LFPAC) for review. For those that do not meet the criteria, a written letter is sent to the requestor explaining why the request does not meet eligibility requirements. Recently, the Public Affairs Department has received a request from a constituent to pay for a non-dedicated bench after his request for a constituent memorial bench was determined not to meet the eligibility requirements per the policy.

While rest benches or non-dedicated benches are defined in Policy 5.01, public funds (or donations) for these types of benches is not addressed. Over the past few years, the District has been receiving an increase in the number of requests for constituent memorial benches, and most do not meet the eligibility requirements under the current policy. We anticipate other members of the public may also request non-dedicated benches in lieu of memorial benches.

The Public Affairs Department is preparing to work with the LFPAC to revise the current policy to address the private funding of non-dedicated rest benches. As a reminder, all Board policies are first reviewed and approved by LFPAC before being forwarded to the full Board of Directors. Until a revised policy is adopted, which is anticipated by December 2016 or early 2017, the General Manager recommends placing a moratorium on adding rest benches to the preserves unless those rest benches are necessary replacements, or are new locations approved as part of a Preserve Plan, Site Plan, or Use and Management Plan Amendment.

Revising Policy 5.01 for Site Naming, Gift and Special Recognition will be added as a proposed project in Public Affairs' Fiscal Year 2016-17 Action Plan. The anticipated time for a revised policy is by the end of 2016 or early 2017. In addition, the Public Affairs Department will present to LFPAC some alternatives to benches that allow the public to memorialize or honor their loved ones.

Attachment:

1. Policy 5.01 for Site Naming, Gift and Special Recognition
2. Original Letter of Request
3. Response Letter from Public Affairs
4. Second Letter of Request

Board Policy Manual

Site Naming, Gift, and Special Recognition	Policy 5.01 Chapter 5 – Historical/Cultural
Effective Date: 8/25/93	Revised Date: 11/13/13
Prior Versions: 8/25/93, 9/14/94, 6/24/98, 9/12/01, 10/8/08, 1/13/10, 10/27/10	

I. SITE NAMING

All District site names and signs should be kept as simple and functional as possible. When a property is acquired, either as an addition to an existing preserve or for the establishment of a new preserve, a name will be recommended in the Preliminary Use and Management Plan. In most cases, "open space preserve" is appropriate as part of the name; however, there may be circumstances when another designation may be used. In some cases, a temporary name may be retained until the next Comprehensive Use and Management Plan review.

A. Open Space Preserves

The name given to each open space preserve should be general enough to remain suitable if the site is enlarged, but specific enough to give its location some significance. Properties added to an open space preserve may not always be contiguous with that preserve.

1. Preserves shall be named after:
 - a) Geographical features of broad, general significance to the preserve;
 - b) Historical persons, cultural names, uses, or events broadly associated with the locale.

2. Preserves shall not be named after any individuals other than historical persons as noted above.

B. Preserve Areas, Trails, Site Improvements, Historic Sites and Unnamed Natural Features

This designation refers to specific locations, land formations, trails, natural and physical features, staging areas and other site improvements, and areas of significance within open space preserves. Recognition of significant land gifts, including "bargain" purchases, will be negotiated at the time of the gift or bargain purchase.

1. Preserve areas, trails, site improvements including benches and bridges, historic sites and previously unnamed natural features shall ordinarily be named after:
 - a) Geographical, botanical or zoological identification;

b) Historical persons, uses, or events associated with the site, or persons and organizations listed in Section III: "Special Recognition".

2. Preserve areas, trails, site improvements, historic sites and unnamed natural features may in rare instances be named after a living individual who has made an outstanding contribution to the District, subject to approval by the Board of Directors.

II. GIFT RECOGNITION

The purpose of the gift recognition policy is to provide an opportunity for the District to recognize and commend individuals or groups that have made significant contributions of cash, equipment, materials, goods or professional services toward the enhancement of the District, its programs, and its facilities.

A. Unsolicited Cash Gifts:

Up to \$25	Postcard of thanks
\$26 to \$499	Letter signed by General Manager
\$500 to \$1,999	Letter signed by President of the Board
\$2,000 to \$4,999	Letter signed by President of the Board and District gift item (note cards, etc.)
\$5,000 to \$9,999	Letter signed by President of the Board and framed photograph of favorite District preserve
\$10,000 or more	Letter signed by President of the Board and Resolution and framed photograph of District preserve and mention in a District publication*

*These items will be provided only if desired by the donor.

III. SPECIAL RECOGNITION

The Legislative, Funding and Public Affairs Committee (LFPAC) shall be the committee designated to discuss all requests that meet the criteria of the policy for special recognition, made by members of the Board of Directors or by members of the public, including bench memorials and the naming of bridges, and after deliberation shall decide which requests will be referred to the full Board for a vote.

The District places benches in its preserves for three distinct purposes:

A. District Rest Benches

These benches provide constituents with a place to rest. District staff places these benches without involving a District committee or the full Board. Regular benches must be either a backed or a backless standard bench as described in Section V below.

B. Constituent Memorial Benches

These are benches which have been requested by constituents in order to honor a member of the public and are funded by the requestors who must pay \$5,000 for the lifetime cost of the bench. LFPAC discusses requests for these benches and decides which requests will be referred to the full Board for a vote. Requests must be in reference to a deceased significant supporter or a volunteer, as defined in the following sections.

a) Constituent memorial benches shall only be placed in locations that have been pre-determined by the District and approved by the Use and Management committee and by the full Board of Directors.

b) If a request for special recognition is approved by the Board of Directors, the requestor(s) shall pay for the cost of constructing, installing and maintaining a memorial bench by contributing \$5,000 to a Memorial Bench Fund to cover the lifetime cost of the bench. The District will put this fund into an interest-bearing account which will be used solely for memorial bench construction, installation, repair, and maintenance.

c) Bench plaques will be 2 x 6 inches in size.

d) Benches must be one of the two District standard bench designs.

C. District Memorial Benches

These are benches which are installed by the District in response to requests by members of the Board of Directors to honor deceased "Founders," "Significant Supporters", and "Volunteers".

a) LFPAC can initiate a bench request and refer a decision to the full Board or individual Board members can initiate a bench request which will be referred to LFPAC for discussion before it is referred to the full Board for a final decision. Honorees must be deceased "Founders", "Significant Supporters", and "Volunteers" (per policy Section III D below).

b) For these benches there are no design specification limits or limits on their location. The District will pay for the lifetime cost of the bench.

D. Deceased Founders, Significant Supporters, and Volunteers

"Founders", "Significant Supporters", and "Volunteers" are eligible for special recognition, including memorials.

"Founders" shall be defined as an individual or group of individuals who participated in the formation of the District, or were significant supporters of the formation of the District.

"Significant Supporters" shall be defined as individuals or group of individuals who have shown conspicuous or noteworthy support for the District through extraordinary contributions of time and effort to the advancement of the goals, philosophy and mission of the District.

"Volunteers" shall be defined as individuals or groups of individuals who donated their time to the District by working for the District's docent or volunteer program.

IV. RECOGNITION OF HISTORIC SITES

A. A recognition monument, normally in plaque form, may be considered by the Board if it is in relation to a specific existing building or other remaining structure of significant historic value. In such cases, the plaque will be affixed or in close proximity to the structure itself. If there is no structure, then recognition may be considered for inclusion on District informational materials or trail signage. Such a site, in the absence of a building or structure, will ordinarily not be physically marked except as determined by the Board on a case-by-case basis as part of the Use and Management planning process for the corresponding open space preserve.

Any Board-approved memorial names shall be included in site brochures, maps, or other informational materials.

V. STANDARD BENCH DESIGN SPECIFICATION

A. District Rest Benches and Constituent Memorial benches, described in III(A) and (B) above, are limited to either of the two following standard bench designs:

Backed bench:

Dumor - Bench 88, recycled plastic slates (color: CEDAR), steel leg supports (color: BLACK, IMBEDDED)
6' or 8' lengths

Backless bench:

Dumor - Bench 103, recycled plastic slates (color: CEDAR), steel leg supports (color: BLACK, IMBEDDED)
103-60PL 6' long, 3 supports
103-80PL 8' long, 3 supports

B. LFPAC can at any point bring designs to the Board that differ from the District's standard bench designs.

Mr. Larry Hassett, Director
Peninsular Open Space District
350 Distel Circle,
Los Altos, CA 94022

485 Woodside Road, Apt.3114
Redwood City, CA 94061
September 5, 2015

Dear Larry,


Request for Permission to Locate a Memorial Bench for
Heather C. Broome in the Russian Ridge Open Space.

I understand that there are restrictions on allowing Memorial Benches to be located in any Open Spaces, depending on the record of support by the individual who is to be named on the bench. You may remember my late wife, Heather, who was a very active member of the local League of Women Voters, and who was a great supporter of the Peninsular Open Space District. One of our favorite walks was to hike from the Bay Overlook entrance to the Russian Ridge Open Space to its Northern boundary and then to walk back down the driveway to Skyline Boulevard where Rocky Creek Road begins. She was so fond of this walk, that we spread her ashes around the rocks at the crest of the trail.

Our family would greatly appreciate the opportunity to place a Memorial Bench at this location which has a wonderful view to the West over the Pacific Ocean. To my knowledge there are no other benches in this part of the Russian Ridge Open Space. When the time comes we could add my name to the Bench. As you know, I was an active member of the Board of Directors of the South Skyline Association and was responsible for getting CALTRANS to install signs on Route 84 Advising Trucks with Trailers longer than 30 ft. from Kingpin to Rear Axle not to use the hilly section with its Sharp Curves.

We understand that there is a contribution of \$5,000 to be made to the Peninsular Open Space District in order to pay for the Bench.

Yours truly,


Kenneth R. Broome P.E.

C.C. Ruth Waldhauer
Claire V. Broome



Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District

GENERAL MANAGER
Stephen E. Abbors

BOARD OF DIRECTORS
Pete Siemens
Yoriko Kishimoto
Jed Cyr
Curt Riffle
Nonette Hanko
Larry Hassett
Cecily Harris

September 15, 2015

Mr. Kenneth R. Broome
485 Woodside Road, Apt. 3114
Redwood City, CA 94061

Dear Mr. Broome:

Thank you for contacting Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District requesting a memorial bench for your late wife, Heather. Director Hassett forwarded to me your September 5, 2015 letter. I am responsible for aligning public requests with our board policy and forwarding those that meet the criteria to the District's Legislative, Funding and Public Affairs Committee for review. I understand Russian Ridge Open Space Preserve was a special place for both of you and appreciate you sharing this information.

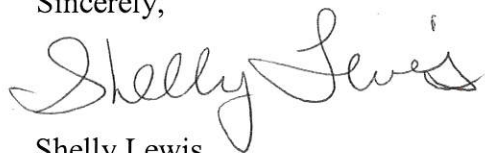
We get many requests for memorial benches throughout the year. While we would like to honor all of those very special requests, we unfortunately cannot always do this. As an open space agency, we try to keep the preserves in as natural a state as possible. Therefore, we do have a policy to guide us in memorial bench placement, and I have given careful consideration to your request based on this policy.

As part of this consideration, I looked at the District's Policy for Site Naming, Special Recognition, and Gift Recognition, attached with this letter. The policy states that constituent benches may be dedicated for memorial purposes to commemorate a deceased member of the public who was a significant supporter specifically to the Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District. Significant supporters are identified as individuals or groups of individuals who have shown conspicuous or noteworthy support for the District through extraordinary contributions of time and effort to the advancement of the goals, philosophy and mission of the District. For example, the last memorial bench that the Board of Directors approved was for a late volunteer who served for over 20 years on six different volunteer programs within the District.

Unfortunately, after careful review, I did not find that your request met this specific criteria outlined in the policy. If you would like to discuss this decision or feel that additional information could be added to the request, please contact me. You also have the option of attending a future Legislative, Funding, and Public Affairs Committee meeting to make comments on this matter, though the Committee does base their decisions on the approved policy. Committee dates are listed on our website, or I'd be happy to provide those to you.

Again, thank you for taking the time to write to us, and I hope you will continue to visit the preserves.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Shelly Lewis". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the typed name.

Shelly Lewis
Public Affairs Manager
650-625-6571 (direct line)
Slewis@openspace.org

Encl: Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District Policy for Site Naming, Special Recognition, and Gift Recognition

Cc: Director Larry Hassett

Shelly Lewis

From: Kenneth R Broome [broome.assocs@gmail.com]
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2016 10:39 AM
To: Shelly Lewis
Subject: Donation of Bench at the Northern End of Russian Ridge Open Space

Shelly,

Please review this letter with Ms Jennifer Woodworth and request her to get the comments and or approval of the appropriate Committees.

My family would like to pay for a bench to be located at the highest point of the trail from the main entrance on to the Russian Ridge Open Space Preserve on Skyline Boulevard, to the Northern Boundary. There is a marvelous view to the West over the lower ridge of hills to the Pacific Ocean, from this point. My late wife, Heather , and I used to come here from our home on Rocky Creek Road as often as possible to view the sunset. There is one other aspect of the access to this viewpoint however that needs to be addressed before members of the Public will be able to visit it freely. I am referring to the locked gate that prevents visitors from leaving or entering the Russian Ridge Open Space District on this trail at about 250 feet north of the proposed location of this bench. The County of San Mateo uses a continuation of this trail beyond the gate in order to access their Radio Communications Building and its various antennae, that are located less than 100 ft beyond the gate.

It is not necessary for our family to have a plaque on the bench with my late wife's name on it, but if the District considers it appropriate to recognize the Broome family as donors of the bench, that would be fine.

I am sure that a combination of the availability of a bench and removal of the obstruction of a locked gate, will greatly add to the Public enjoyment of one of the best views from any of the Open Space Districts.

I would be pleased to discuss this matter further at any of your Committee Meetings.

Yours truly,

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Kenneth R. Broome P.E.
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